TROOPER : John H. Burns #1318 OPERATIONS NO. : 540

TROOP : "B" STATION : Newfoundland

DATE : October 31,1963

MINOR INITIAL REPORT

CRIME : Malicious Mischief (2A:122-1 NJRS)

VICTIM : Cherry Ridge Rifle Range
Canistear Road, Vernon Township, Sussex County, N.J.

ACCUSED : Richard C. Bruenich, Age 21, 931 Red Road, Teaneck, N.J.
White, Male,175 lbs., 6 FT. 0 In., Brown Hair and Eyes.

SUSPECTS : Same as Aforementioned Accused.

PLACE : At the location known as the Cherry Ridge Rifle Range on Canistear Road, Vernon Township, Sussex County, N.J.

DATE : Wednesday, December 26, 1963 between 1:00 PM and 4:00 PM.(EST)

DISPOSITION : Pending Further Investigation.

SUBJECT OF INVESTIGATION : The circumstances surrounding the destruction and burning of buildings and construction equipment at Cherry Ridge Rifle Range during the 1962 Christmas season.

ACTION TAKEN : On October 5, 1963 the undersigned accompanied by Tpr. Roger Gibbins #1705 were detailed via radio by Sgt. Uker #786 to proceed to Cherry Ridge Rifle Range located on Canistear Road, Vernon Township, Sussex County, N.J. on complaint of Game Wardens James Parrish and James Holley that they saw flashes of light in the sky in that general area and they heard young men talking on their C.B. shortwave length who apparently were responsible for the gun fire and explosions.

Upon arriving at the range the above mentioned Game Wardens advised that three young men apparently were staging a private "war" using explosives large calibre gun fire including an anti-tank gun and were seen to fire 30³ calibre tracer ammunition. They also had a set of walkie-talkie radios which used the C.B. shortwave band.

The three men approached by the undersigned at about 10:45 P.M. were tenatively identified as:

1) Richard C. Bruenich, Age 21, 931 Red Road, Teaneck, N.J.
2) Robert A. Young, Jr., Age 21, 207 Cedar Lane, Teaneck, N.J. a member of the U.S. Coast Guard, Service #348-563 (ET3) stationed at Sandy Hook, Ft. Monmouth, N.J.
3) Warren B. Young, Age 17, 207 Cedar Lane, Teaneck, N.J.

All three subjects were dressed in a semi-military type outfit and were wearing World War Two German Type Battle Helmets. In the immediate area were six rifles of different makes, one-20 MM Lahti Semi-Automatic Anti-Tank Gun of Finnish Manufacture, Two-.38 Calibre revolvers, a home-made bomb eight inches high & two inches in diameter with a twelve inch quick burning fuse attached. This bomb was filled with black powder. There was a large quantity of fireworks (cherry bombs, ash cans, 100-1½ inch firecrackers, two boxes of sparklers) and several hundred rounds of ammunition for the various weapons.

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The weapons found in their possession are listed below as follows:

1) 20 MM Lahti Semi-Automatic Anti-Tank Rifle, Finish Make Serial 218
2) 7.64 MM Argentine Rifle, Bolt Action Mauser #3419
3) 303 Calibre British Enfield, Mark 5, Jungle Carbine, #12144D8399
4) .22 Cal. Winchester Bolt Action, Single Shot Rifle, Model 67A
5) .30 Cal. M-1 Carbine, U.S. Rifle #202865
6) 7.62 MM (30 Cal.) Russian Tokarev, Semi-Automatic Rifle, a 1940 Model Serial # AM1610
7) 30.06 Cal. Johnson Rifle, Model 1941, Serial # A9127
8) .38 Cal. H. & R. Arms Co., Worcester, Mass. 5 shot Revolver "Defender 38" Model, 4 inch barrel, Serial # 10816
9) .38 Cal. Colt Revolver, 41 Frame, Six inch barrel cut down to 2 inches, Serial # 341-992 over F., "A.W.Bishop" on bottom of butt.

The two 38 Revolvers and the 20 MM Anti-tank gun were taken in possession by the undersigned pending investigation as to determining proper ownership and to be checked against pending cases of Malicious Mischief.

Upon talking to the subjects involved they advised this writer that they had permission of the owner of the rifle range to use same after being told that the range was closed after dark and was not to be used without proper supervision. After interviewing these subjects for sometime they were instructed to proceed to Newfoundland Station for further questioning re: their peculiar actions and their wanton use of firearms. The vehicle they used was owned and operated by Robert A. Young, Jr. (D.L.# Y6811-65861-[illegible]12-N.J.) and was a 1953 Packard, 4-door sedan, color black.

At Newfoundland Station the three subjects were interrogated further and the undersigned did not learn anything of value so they were permitted to leave and were advised the investigation would continue and they would be contacted at a later date. The undersigned also kept possession of the home made black powder bomb and the quantity of fireworks.

OCOTOBER 12, 1963 Sunday:

On this date Mr. Carl E. Kastner, President of the Cherry Ridge Rifle Range stopped at Newfoundland Station and was interviewed by this writer. He informed the undersigned that during the month of December, 1962 right after Christmas thousands of dollars worth of damage was done to range buildings and construction equipment but at this time it was to numerous to specify. He also stated that he would compile the items that were burned or destroyed by persons unknown who had used a large calibre weapon, possibly a 20 MM gun, and also burned down the Range House by firing tracers into same causing it to be completely destroyed by the fire that resulted from same. He further stated that several black powder bombs were set off causing excessive damage and that he had retained the fragments for possible identification of culprits responsible.

Mr. Carl Kastner was told about the suspicious actions of the three young men on October 5, 1963 and the weapons were displayed to him at that time along with the black powder bomb. His remarks that followed led the undersigned to feel that Charles E. Bruenich was the one responsible for the damage to the garage and bulldozer. Mr. Kastner also stated that the black powder bomb was made of the same material including the base of the container, that caused some of the damage during Christmas week of 1962.

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On October 13, 1963 Mr. Carl B. Kastner contacted this writer and orred same that Richard C. Bruenich, Teaneck, N.J. had phoned him and ated to make restitution for the damage he did at the Range with his MM anti-tank gun since he was the one that had fired the shell through garage into the bulldozer. He was told that the matter was being vestigated by the New Jersey State Police, Newfoundland Station and he uld have to tell them.

This writer attempted to have Richard C. Bruenich come to Newfoundland ation to obtain a written statement and he refused advising that his wyer-Mr. Leo Mazer, Hackensack, N.J. told him not to talk with the police leas he was present. A tenativel date was set with the Attorney on several asions which they did not keep and finally after much persuasion they both rived at Newfoundland Station on October 21, 1963.

Mr. Richard C. Bruenich, in the presence of his Attorney, admitted to e undersigned that he was accompanied by two friends known only as "Walter" d "Allen", whose last name and address were unknown by Mr. Bruenich, on cember 26, 1962 and they were at the range between 1:00 PM and 4:00 PM d that they had fired the 20 MM anti-tank gun into the garage through the ulldozer but they did not do any other damage. It should be noted at this me that Richard Bruenich had received word from some members of the Rifle nge that a 20 MM projectile which had passed through the garage, bulldozer d a large pile of lumber had been recovered by the undersigned at the range hich could be checked ballistically against the weapon owned by Bruenich. fter obtaining the statement which is attached hereto the Accused was allowed return home pending further investigation and gathering of evidence. attempt will be made to locate the two men known as "Walter" and "Allen".

OCTOBER 28, 1963 Monday:

This date the undersigned attempted to take apart the Cletrac Bulldozer o obtain projectiles of a smaller calibre than the 20 MM to be used for allistic test firings comparision with negative results. Also a 50 foot igh tree locate alongside of the former Range House was cut down and a small ection was taken back to Newfoundland Station since there were two tracer rojectiles lodged in the center of this tree which was 9 inches in diameter. or these particular projectiles to have been fired into the tree it was ecessary for them to first to have traveled through the building.

OCTOBER 31, 1963 Thursday:

On this date the undersigned proceeded to the Range and spend considerable ime taken the Cletrac apart and was successful in obtaining several projectiles to be used for test comparison in I.B. Bureau, West Trenton, N.J.

Investigation to be continued:

Respectfully submitted,

Tpr. John H. Burns #1318

John H. Burns

EXHIBIT NO. 1